

Annual Timeline

Open Application Period
(April – June)



Application Review and Selection
(July – September)



Applicants Notified
(October)



Technical and Business Planning
Assistance
(November – April)



Business Plan with Implementation
Strategies Completed
(March – April)



Contract with Use of Funds;
Timeline Signed
(March - April)



Grant Payments Made
to Qualifying Farms
(May-June)

For More Information

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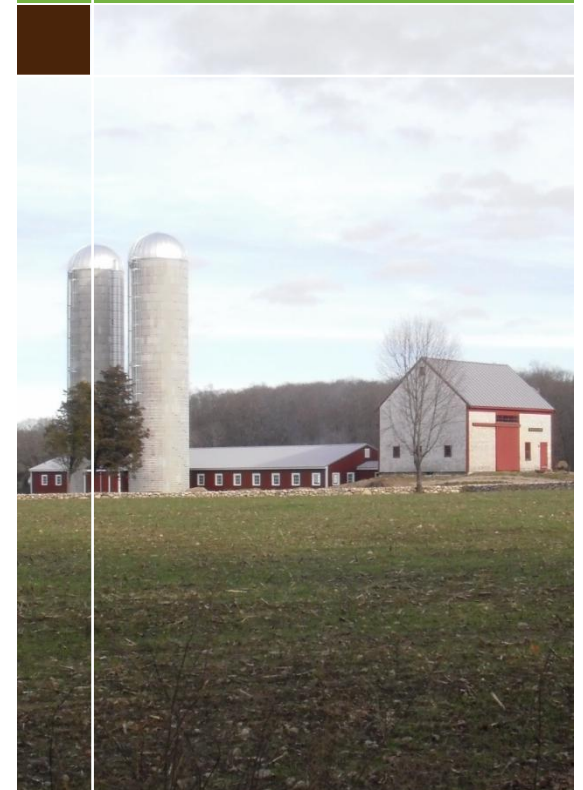
Funding Subject to Availability

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114
www.mass.gov/agr/programs/aip

APR

Improvement Program

Reinvesting in Farmland Protected by
an Agricultural Preservation
Restriction (APR)



Purpose

The Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction Improvement Program (AIP) mission is to help sustain active commercial farming on land that has been protected by APR.

The program provides business planning and technical assistance to eligible farmers in order to improve farm productivity and profitability. A team of consultants helps each farm towards its goal in achieving long term agricultural use and viability.

One of the following achievable objectives needs to be identified for a participant to be eligible to receive funding to implement business plans:

- ❑ Improve the economic viability of the farm
- ❑ Retain or create private sector jobs and tax revenue either directly or indirectly
- ❑ Improve farm productivity and competitiveness
- ❑ Expand farm facilities as part of a modernization or business plan
- ❑ Support renewable energy or environmental projects



Eligibility

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is seeking farmers whose goal is to develop their APR farms into commercially viable operations.

In order to be eligible to apply to the program:

- ❑ Applicant must own land that is enrolled in the Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program, or co-apply with the APR land owner
- ❑ The APR land must be in active agricultural use and have been managed as a commercial agricultural enterprise by the applicant for at least the three (3) previous years
- ❑ Property must have an up-to-date Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) farm conservation plan
- ❑ Non-profit organizations are ineligible for this program

Eligibility requirements may change from year to year.

Process

Applications will be evaluated upon the following criteria:

- ❑ High potential for increased profitability and sustainability
- ❑ Generational farm transfer issues that would be facilitated
- ❑ Clearly defined barriers to ongoing viable farm operations
- ❑ Significant but reversible risks to the continuance of farm operations
- ❑ Relevant agricultural experience and training of applicants

Each participating farm works with a team comprised of professionals from various disciplines, including agriculture, marketing, finance, management, and environmental sciences. The farm's financial records, management practices, equipment, buildings, and natural resources are assessed.

Based upon the farm's assessment, a business plan is developed that includes recommendations for farm improvements. Grant payments to implement business plans will be made to qualifying farmers.

